

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM

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September 1, 2022

Dr. Brett M. Baker
Inspector General
National Archives and Records Administration
8601 Adelphi Road, Room 1300
College Park, MD 20740-6001

Dear Dr. Baker:

On August 8, 2022, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) raided the home of former President Donald J. Trump.¹ This raid was unprecedented. Unfortunately, the Department of Justice (DOJ) has refused to be transparent with the American people about the details of this unprecedented action. The raid was apparently necessary to collect certain documents sought by the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) allegedly in former President Trump's possession. According to the recently released affidavit predicated the issuance of a search warrant, NARA's Office of the Inspector General (OIG) referred the matter to DOJ.² Republicans on the Committee on Oversight and Reform request information and documents regarding this referral, including the OIG's role in reviewing this matter.

On August 10, 2022, Committee Republicans requested documents and information from Acting Archivist Debra Steidel Wall about NARA's role in the Mar-a-Lago raid.³ However, in response to our request, NARA denied possessing any responsive documents despite publicly available information indicating otherwise.⁴ We requested NARA amend what appears to be an incomplete response to our first request for information.⁵

While Committee Republicans pursue answers from NARA, the affidavit filed by the FBI before the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Florida described the need for a search

¹ Eric Beech, *Eric Trump: FBI raid conducted over documents sought by National Archives*, REUTERS (Aug. 8, 2022); see also Alex Leary, Sadie Gurman and Aruna Viswanatha, *FBI Searches Trump's Florida Home Mar-a-Lago in Document Investigation*, WALL ST. J. (Aug. 9, 2022).

² Affidavit in support of an application under Rule 41 for a warrant to search and seize, *In the Matter of the Search of: Locations Within the Premises to be Searched in Attachment A*, p. 7-8 (S.D. Fla.) (unsealed Aug. 26, 2022).

³ Letter from Hon. James Comer & nineteen other Republican Members of the H. Oversight & Reform Comm. to Ms. Debra Steidel Wall, Acting Archivist of the U.S., (Aug. 10, 2022) available at <https://republicans-oversight.house.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/2022-08-10-NARA-MAL567537660.pdf>.

⁴ Letter from Ms. Debra Steidel Wall, Acting Archivist of the U.S. to Hon. James Comer, Ranking Member, H. Comm. on Oversight & Reform (Aug. 16, 2022).

⁵ Letter from Hon. James Comer & nineteen other Republican Members of the H. Oversight & Reform Comm. to Ms. Debra Steidel Wall, Acting Archivist of the U.S., (Aug. 30, 2022) available at <https://republicans-oversight.house.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/2022-08-29-Follow-up-letter-to-NARA-re-FBI-search.pdf>.

warrant for the Mar-a-Lago raid when unsealed in a heavily redacted form and revealed the OIG's participation in referring this matter to DOJ. According to the affidavit, on February 9, 2022, "the Special Agent in Charge of NARA's Office of the Inspector General sent the NARA Referral via email to DOJ."⁶ Transparency is particularly important in the post-pandemic era when Americans are lacking trust in our nation's institutions. Congress, and particularly the Oversight Committee, has a duty to provide transparency and accountability for the American people.

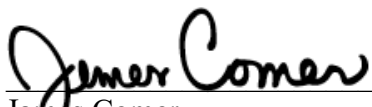
Please provide the following documents, covering the time period from January 20, 2021, to present, no later than September 15, 2022:

1. All documents and communications between any employee or agent of the NARA OIG and NARA regarding documents in the possession of President Trump;
2. All documents and communications between any employee or agent of the NARA OIG and the FBI or Department of Justice, including the Offices of the United States Attorneys, regarding documents in the possession of President Trump; and
3. All documents and communications between or among employees or agents of the NARA OIG regarding any documents in the possession of former President Trump.

To ask any related follow-up questions, please contact Committee on Oversight and Reform Republican Staff at (202) 225-5074.

The Committee on Oversight and Reform has specific jurisdiction over NARA under House Rule X. Additionally, the Committee on Oversight and Reform is the principal oversight committee of the U.S. House of Representatives and has broad authority to investigate "any matter" at "any time" under House Rule X. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



James Comer
Ranking Member
Committee on Oversight & Reform

cc: The Honorable Carolyn B. Maloney, Chairwoman
Committee on Oversight & Reform

⁶ *Supra*, n. 2.